Kinder und Onlinewerbung. Erscheinungsformen von Werbung im Internet, ihre Wahrnehmung durch Kinder und ihre regulatorischer Kontext

Engl. transl.: Children and Online Advertising Forms of Internet Advertising, Perception by Children and Regulatory Context

# Keywords

* online ddvertising
* primary school children
* advertising literacy
* content analysis
* interviews
* quasi-experiment

# Details

## Issued

2014

## Language

German

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## Type

Book

## Book title

Kinder und Onlinewerbung. Erscheinungsformen von Werbung im Internet, ihre Wahrnehmung durch Kinder und ihr regulatorischer Kontext

## Publisher

Vistas

## Place

Leipzig

## Topics

## Sample

Content analysis: Analysis of 100 favourite websites of children (+ a deeper analysis focusing on sub-pages of certain websites)

Sample survey Face-to-face survey with children aged 6 to 11 (n=633)
Field phase: November 11, 2013, to December 08, 2013
Conducted by GfK Enigma

Qualitative sub-study Guided interviews with children aged 6 to 11 (n=100)
Qualitative group interviews (n=6)
Standardised parent interviews (n=100)
Interviews with teachers (n=4)

## Implications For Educators About

Other

## Implications For Policy Makers About

* Creating a safe environment for children online
* Stepping up awareness and empowerment
* High-quality content online for children and young people

# Abstract

"What forms of advertising do children encounter on the Internet? How do children interpret online advertising and how do they handle it? What problems and demands for action are identifiable? The study "Children and Online Advertising" (“Kinder und Onlinewerbung”) addresses these questions from the perspectives of Communication Studies, Media Education and Law – and points out possible courses of action for different groups of stakeholders.
Advertising is ubiquitous in children’s everyday life. They come across advertising on leaflets, advertising columns on their way to kindergarten, at train stations, on television – and on the internet. For children, it is quite easy to identify posters on an advertising column as advertising material, and the same is true for clear-cut commercial breaks on TV. For online services, it’s is not always that simple: The existing forms of online advertising require previous knowledge and are also quite diverse, which is why children are especially likely to have difficulties in recognising commercial communication.
From the perspectives of Law and Media Education, the question arises whether children are
able to identify online advertising as such and to understand its intention. A basic understanding of advertising and reliable labelling of advertising material are seen as fundamental requirements for children to be able to handle advertising in an adequate manner. If these requirements are not – or only partly – met, this calls for measures concerning either the design of such contents or an improvement of media literacy.
The Media Authority of North Rhine-Westphalia (Landesanstalt für Medien NordrheinWestfalen, LFM) and the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend, BMFSFJ) assigned the Hans Bredow Institute for Media Research to examine the current advertising practice on 100 websites that children referred to as their favourite online presences, to analyse how children deal with online advertising and to assess the advertising regulations in view of the findings.
This summary provides an overview of the core findings. The results of the three modules
serve as a basis for policy options and recommendations that – following a multi-governance approach – take various groups of actors into account." (Part of the Executive summary)
Extended version: https://www.hans-bredow-institut.de/uploads/media/Projekte/cms/media/8ef9bedf4ea378fae6a1c5a1b093e6b34adb7f98.pdf

# Outcome

Online advertising is ubiquitous: 50 of the 100 considered websites’ front pages contained advertisements; 191 clear-cut advertising segments were found in total. Considering only those offers that featured at least one clear-cut advertising segment, the average amount is 3.8 segments per page – 5 segments on websites for youths and 2.9 segments on websites specifically aimed at children.
Ways children handle online advertising are dependent on several factors: Almost all children are familiar with the term “advertising” in different contexts (especially
concerning TV). Some children also understand that advertising is supposed to draw attention to certain products or to highlight their advantages. However, when
children try to define the nature of advertising, they usually don’t mention all these characteristics, but mostly only one of these aspects.
To recognize online advertising, children draw on different distinction criteria, e.g. design (27%), labelling (26%), knowledge about the advertised product from other media (21%), or a mentioned purchase price (21%). 20% rely on their own experience with a product as an
identifying trigger, 15% look for “close”-buttons (“X”) and 6% rely on their
knowledge that advertising content tends to appear in a certain screen area, depending on the offer. The older the children, the more distinguishing marks they can rely on to recognize
advertising offers.
Based on the findings, the study developed a model for the reception of online advertising which illustrates that dealing with the numerous and heterogeneous forms of online advertising competently dependents on several factors: the degree of
being able to recognize advertising, the individual conceptions of advertising, the
ability to recognize the contextual frame of an offer. All these factors are related to individual cognitive development, the general online experience and knowledge of specific forms of online content – but also media socialization in general, including the children’s former advertising and consumer socialization (and thus also their parents’ online consumer behaviour),
Finally, the authors highlight various legal and pedagogical challenges related to the autonomy of action, Informational self-determination and social competence, and point to possible courses of action